

# WHAT IS RURAL CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT?

## Clustering Homes in Rural Areas at the Urban Edge

### What role can Rural Clusters play in SEGA?

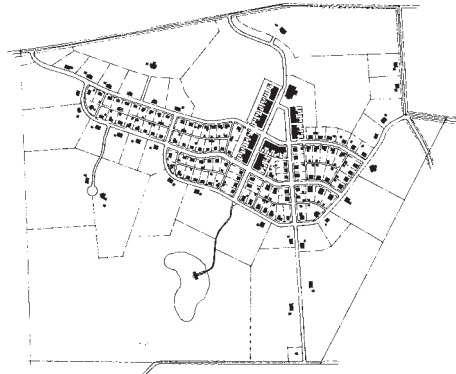
**A TRANSITIONAL BUFFER.** Urban areas and large agricultural operations cannot always sit side-by-side. Noise, dust, and pesticides from farms pose health concerns for residents, while farmers need space to move machinery and goods. Rural clusters along the eastern edge of SEGA form a transition between the urban area and the agricultural lands beyond.

**AN ATTRACTIVE RESIDENTIAL OPTION.** Rural clusters offer a rural lifestyle within an environmentally responsible land use framework.

**A MEANS TO PRESERVE LAND.** Rural cluster lands can be used for organic small-scale farming, equestrian activities, or other uses compatible with the nearby homes. In the end, the vast majority of the land is preserved as viable agricultural land or open space.



Conventional zoning calls for “wall-to-wall” rural lots that fill the entire site.



Rural cluster design concentrates the same number of lots within a smaller area, preserving the continuity and usability of the surrounding land.

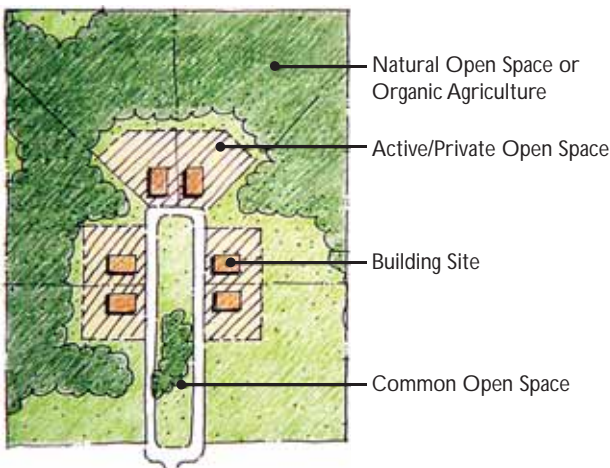
## PRAIRIE CROSSING

### Grayslake, Illinois

**Land developed:** 677 acres  
**Land preserved:** Over 60% of the site (~400 acres), including farmland, pasture, restored prairie, restored wetlands, lakes, and ponds.  
**Homes:** 359 single family homes; 36 condominiums  
**Key features:** Organic farm, on-site school, stable, extensive trail network, connection to Metra rail connection to downtown Chicago.

A prime example of conservation design, Prairie Crossing safeguards large extents of farmland and prairie while providing a community-oriented, rural atmosphere. Single family homes are clustered around common green spaces and surrounded by the protected land. A 90-acre organic farm, which serves a weekend farm market, is at the heart of the community.

*Over 400 acres of land surrounding the rural clusters at Prairie Crossing is protected as active and passive open spaces.*



Rural Clusters in Prairie Crossing are oriented much like those in this diagram



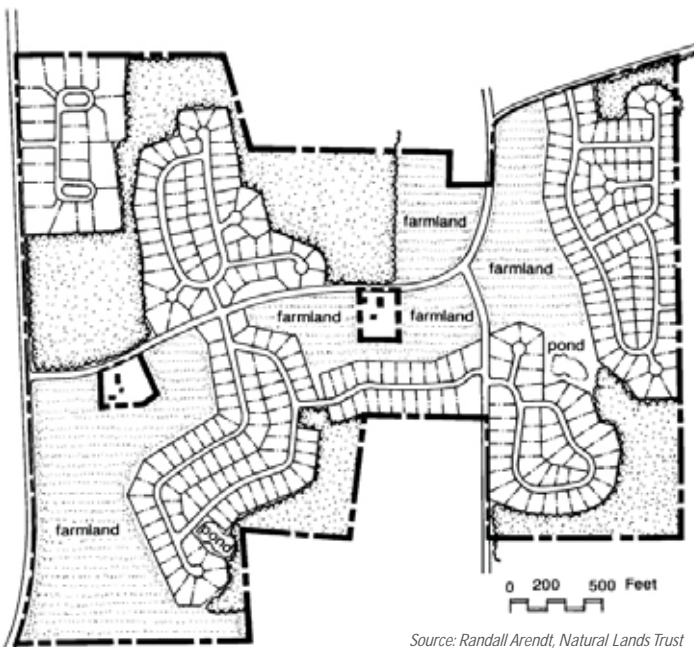
## FARMVIEW

### Lower Makefield Township, Pennsylvania

**Land developed:** 418 acres  
**Land preserved:** 213 acres, including 145 acres of farmland and 68 acres of woodland  
**Homes:** 322, with an average lot size below 1/2 acre  
**Key features:** Active farms preserved in perpetuity, trail networks

Lower Makefield Township created a new Farmland Cluster Ordinance to allow for smaller lot sizes at Farmview, which fall below the traditional one-acre standard. By limiting development to compact, clustered lots, over half of the original farmland on site was preserved.

The farmland is now held in perpetuity by a local conservation organization, which leases the land to local farmers who employ traditional practices to minimize conflicts with the residential areas. Homes are separated from the active farms by a 75-foot vegetated buffer.



Source: Randall Arendt, Natural Lands Trust

*Farmview's high market demand has led to similar developments in the area that have preserved a total of 500 acres of farmland.*



Source: Randall Arendt, Natural Lands Trust



Source: Randall Arendt, Natural Lands Trust